



ETHICS REPORTER

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CHPA Leads As Lobbying Spending Records Set



Lobbyists and their employers spent more money lobbying in the 2012 General Assembly than in any session in Kentucky history. Total spending of \$8.8 million surpassed the previous record of \$8.4 million, which was set in the 2010 legislative session.

Lobbying spending continues its upward trend, as spending in the first four months of this year nearly matches amounts spent for the entire year in 2000. During this year's session, over \$7.5 million was spent on compensation paid to lobbyists by the businesses and organizations which employ them. There were 651 employers registered during the 2012 legislative session, and 635 lobbyists.

This year's historic level of spending is led by **Consumer Healthcare Products Association (CHPA)**, which spent \$486,053, a record amount for a single employer during a legislative session. **CHPA's** 2012 spending eclipsed the former record, which was the \$311,000 spent by **CHPA** in the last two months of the 2010 session.

As in 2010, and in contrast to most employers, the majority of **CHPA's** spending was on expenses (\$442,000), rather than lobbyist compensation. **CHPA's** expenses included phone banking and website advertising which allows citizens to contact legislators directly.

In addition, **CHPA** undertook an extensive public advertising campaign, which is not reportable as lobbying. **CHPA** represents over-the-counter medicine manufacturers and distributors, including **Bayer Healthcare, GlaxoSmithKline, Johnson & Johnson, Merck, Novartis, Pfizer, and Purdue Pharma**. As in 2010 and 2011, **CHPA** lobbied to change or defeat legislation which would require a prescription to purchase products containing ephedrine and pseudoephedrine, which are used to make methamphetamine.

In this year's session, legislation requiring a doctor's prescription for meth precursors gave way to Senate Bill 3, which was enacted into law. SB 3 will decrease the monthly over-the-counter purchase limit of ephedrine and pseudoephedrine in pill or tablet forms from 9 grams to 7.2 grams, and impose a 24 gram yearly limit on those purchases.

CHPA's spending far outpaced the second-highest spending employer, **Kentucky Hospital Association**, which spent \$134,473 during the 2012 session. The rest of the top spenders were: **Kentucky Chamber of Commerce** (\$121,525); **Altria Client Services** (\$104,729); **AT&T** (\$87,441); **Kentucky Medical Association** (\$84,880); **Kentucky Retail Federation** (\$78,060); **Kentucky Education Association** (\$74,543); **Kentucky Association of Healthcare Facilities** (\$73,337); **Kentucky Bankers Association** (\$72,320); **Kentucky Optometric Association** (\$70,169); **Kentucky Farm Bureau Federation** (\$64,401); **Kentucky Association of Manufacturers** (\$57,409); **Kentucky Justice Association** (\$56,875); **CSX Corporation** (\$51,569); and **Kentucky Association of Electric Cooperatives** (\$51,058).



New Employers Register

Organizations which have registered to lobby since the end of the 2012 General Assembly include: **Fortress Capital Formation LLC**, a New York-based investment manager which states it is lobbying on issues relating to Kentucky's public employee retirement systems, including KERS, CERS, State Police Retirement System, and Teachers' Retirement System; **Janus Capital Management**, a Denver-based investment firm, which states it is also lobbying on state pension investments; **Federation of Appalachian Housing Enterprises**, a Berea-based organization lobbying on affordable housing issues; and **Molina Healthcare**, a Long Beach, California company which states it provides Medicaid-related solutions for low-income families and individuals, and assists state agencies in administration of the Medicaid program.



Late Filers

The following employers have not filed spending reports which are overdue at the Legislative Ethics Commission: **American Federation of State/Municipal Employees, Council 62**; **American Pharmacy Cooperative**; **American Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals**; **Executive Transportation Systems LLC**; **Kentucky Blood Center**; **Kentucky Tax Bill Servicing, Inc.**; and **Legal Aid of the Bluegrass**.

Lobbyist Supplied Free Tickets to Reds Game



By Andrew J. Tobias, *Dayton Daily News*
May 26, 2012

A **Time Warner** lobbyist affiliated with a corporate-backed group helped provide free tickets to a Cincinnati Reds game that 22 Ohio lawmakers accepted but did not disclose to the public.

The legislators and their staff accepted 47 tickets to watch an April 29, 2011, game from Great American Ball Park's "party deck." The tickets were worth \$75 each, and **Time Warner** lobbyist Ed

Kozelek helped distribute the tickets and decided who got how many, according to public records published recently by the Center for Media and Democracy.

But the legislators didn't break ethics rules under an exemption that critics say is a loophole to get around laws designed to help the public monitor corporate efforts to wine and dine politicians. This newspaper reviewed hundreds of public records and talked to lawmakers and legal experts about the relationship between money and politics.

"It's just a back-door way for corporations to have more influence over the legislature without oversight," Brian Rothenberg, executive director of ProgressOhio, said.

Describing the exemption that allowed the legislators to accept the tickets, Rothenberg continued: "And for the average consumer what that means is . . . your politicians are circumventing ethics rules in a system written by legislators to allow (corporations) to have more influence than you as a citizen would be allowed to have."

House ethics rules forbid lawmakers from taking gifts worth more than \$75 from a lobbyist, and require them to report any gifts worth more than \$25. But because the baseball game was scheduled entertainment during a two-day conference for the American Legislative Exchange Council, the tickets fell under a gray area.

ALEC is a 501(3)(c) nonprofit public policy organization that brings together corporations and legislators to write "model legislation" to promote limited government and free markets, according to the group's website.

Because the Ohio General Assembly pays annual membership dues to ALEC, the Reds tickets fell under an exemption in gift disclosure laws for entertainment that is part of a conference. So lawmakers who belong to ALEC attend the conferences for free, while corporations that donate to belong to ALEC pick up the bill.

Since the tickets were handed out at ALEC's registration desk, lawmakers didn't "knowingly" accept them from a lobbyist, and thus were exempted from lobbying limits, said Ohio Legislative Inspector General Tony Bledsoe. "And I can understand an argument about that," he said. "Absolutely, if this game was held apart from ALEC and not part of the conference, then that has to be disclosed."

Bledsoe said that since learning of the ALEC event, he has decided to issue a clarification on disclosure rules in the coming weeks that would apply to all conferences attended by legislators. "This office has always promoted public disclosure," Bledsoe said when asked if lawmakers should have disclosed the tickets from the lobbyist.

State Rep. John Adams, ALEC's public sector chairman in Ohio, said the disclosure exemption for the ALEC-related expenses makes it easier to attend conferences without worrying about disclosure rules. He said he views the conferences as an educational opportunity, not a lobbying event. "That's what I like about ALEC — you do not have to disclose for the simple fact that it is educational," he said.

ALEC holds three conferences a year where lawmakers and corporate representatives draw up model legislation, or share laws from other states. ALEC bills have been passed into law across the U.S., including in Ohio, where bills to toughen voter ID laws, privatize prisons and reduce collective bargaining rights for public employees all have ALEC origins.

ALEC's critics contend the group conducts widespread political lobbying and uses its charitable designation to avoid lobbying restrictions.

One ALEC conference last year was held in New Orleans, for which most Ohio lawmakers who attended were reimbursed by ALEC for expenses between \$1,500 and \$2,000. Sessions were punctuated each night by dinners at pricey restaurants and events such as cigar receptions, paid for by corporate sponsors, records show. In the months leading up to ALEC's 2011 conference in Cincinnati, records show Kara Joseph, a senior legislative aide to Adams, worked with Kozelek, the **Time Warner** lobbyist and ALEC's private sector chairman, to distribute Reds tickets to legislators.

In one e-mail, Joseph fielded a request from Andy Thompson, a state representative from Marietta, who asked if he should buy three extra tickets so his children could attend. She forwarded the request to Kozelek.

"We'll make sure they are taken care of. Just keep track of the ticket distribution and let's not advertise what we're doing for him," responded Kozelek, who referred a reporter's phone message to **Time Warner** spokeswoman, who didn't respond to questions.

Fifteen legislators accepted two or more tickets, according to a distribution list. Bledsoe, the legislative inspector general, declined to comment on Joseph's actions, but speaking generally, said legislative staffers aren't allowed under House ethics rules to accept gifts from lobbyists with the purpose of redistributing to others in their office to get around rules that prohibit lawmakers from accepting more than \$75 in gifts from a lobbyist. "We don't want someone playing the game where they act as a conduit," he said.

Joseph was recently transferred to an administrative position for the Ohio State Highway Patrol starting April 23, 2012, according to state records. She had worked in the legislature since 1998. Adams said her transfer was not connected to questions about ALEC.

Legislators who attended the Reds game last year enjoyed the view from a "party deck" that included unlimited food, drinks and private bathrooms. State Sen. Bill Coley said he received one ticket to the game and that it was part of ALEC's conference. He said he was not aware tickets were from **Time Warner**, despite an ALEC flier that showed the event was sponsored by the telecommunications company. A **Time Warner** logo was printed on the invitation. "It was not a reportable event," Coley said. "All the rules were complied with."

He said **Time Warner** officials mingled with lawmakers who attended the game, but they didn't pitch anything. "It's a chance to interact on a less formal basis," Coley said of ALEC conferences. "It's a place where legislators exchange ideas about what's working and what's not working in different states."

Other area lawmakers who received tickets for the baseball game include state Rep. Jim Butler of Oakwood, state Rep. Tim Derickson of Oxford, former state representative Jarrod Martin of Beavercreek and Ohio Senate President Tom Niehaus of Cincinnati.

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State Legislator Arrested in FBI Sting
Arizona - *Arizona Republic* - May 16, 2012

Arizona Rep. Ben Arredondo, the former Tempe City member caught up in last year's Fiesta Bowl ticket scandal, has been charged with bribery, mail fraud, extortion, and lying in an unrelated FBI tickets-for-favors sting.

A five-count indictment alleges Arredondo demanded tickets to sporting events and gifts from a fake company that ostensibly wanted to do development deals in Tempe. The company was a ruse fronted by undercover FBI agents.

Arredondo made no moves to resign his House seat and is under no legal obligation to do so. State law requires a member to leave only if convicted of a crime. He is scheduled to be arraigned on May 30.

The federal indictment is unrelated to the Fiesta Bowl scandal, in which Arredondo accepted expensive tickets to sporting events from bowl executives after helping the bowl secure a \$6.5 million subsidy from Tempe in 2005. Maricopa County Attorney Bill Montgomery's investigation last year of Arredondo and 30 other elected officials who took gifts from the bowl concluded charges were not warranted. The FBI sting began before the Fiesta Bowl probe, operating from February 2009 to November 2010. It is not clear what prompted the investigation.

During his tenure as a council member, from 1994 to 2010, Arredondo's practice of accepting free tickets to sporting events was well-known around City Hall. The federal indictment alleges Arredondo accepted \$306 in tickets in 2009 to an Arizona Cardinals game, more than \$1,200 in tickets to Major League Baseball's 2009 American League Championship game, and 18 tickets worth about \$2,400 for various Arizona Diamondbacks games in 2010. The indictment says Arredondo also asked the fictional company's representatives to purchase a table at a charity event for \$550, with the understanding he would invite guests of his choosing.

In return, Arredondo took official action to benefit the fictitious company by sharing information about Tempe's municipal bidding process with an FBI agent posing as a company official, alleges the indictment. The information was in relation to a project Arredondo believed the fictitious company was interested in bidding on.

The Arredondo indictment follows the resignation in January of state Sen. Scott Bundgaard, who was the subject of an ethics inquiry into his behavior in the wake of a fight with his girlfriend along a freeway. A month later, Rep. Richard Miranda resigned, citing personal reasons. Soon thereafter, he pleaded guilty to federal charges of money laundering. In April, there was an effort to oust Rep. Daniel Patterson for repeated problems with domestic violence and other behavior his colleagues said distracted from the Legislature's work.

Group Throws Financial Weight behind Ethics Reform Initiative

Arkansas - Arkansas News - May 11, 2012

A bipartisan group with political and financial influence has formed to see that a proposed ethics and campaign reform initiative gets on the November general election ballot in Arkansas. Better Ethics Now, which includes former U.S. Sen. Dale Bumpers (D-Ark.), former state Sen. Jim Keet, and former U.S. Rep. John Hammerschmidt (R-Ark.), announced its support for Regnat Populus 2012 in a bid to certify for the ballot a proposed initiated act to ban gifts to legislators and further restrict ex-lawmakers from becoming lobbyists.

Keet said the ethics reform initiative would help restore voter confidence in state government while decreasing the inappropriate influence of special interest groups. "This is not a Republican or Democrat, or conservative or liberal issue; it is a good government issue," said Keet.

Under the proposal, lobbyists would no longer be able to give gifts to legislators. Currently, they can give up to \$100 in gifts, food, or other items to individual lawmakers. The proposal also would double the one-year waiting period that a lawmaker must wait after leaving office before becoming a lobbyist, and it would prohibit direct corporate and union contributions to candidates for public office.

New Bribery Charges Filed Against Ex-Senate Leader

New York - *New York Times* - May 3, 2012

Joseph Bruno, a former New York Senate majority leader, was charged with taking bribes and kickbacks in a fraud scheme during his long tenure in office, setting up another battle with federal prosecutors who won a conviction against him in 2009. The indictment comes nearly six months after a federal appeals court vacated Bruno's previous conviction because of a ruling in a separate case by the U.S. Supreme Court that undermined the government's legal claims against Bruno. But the appeals court said Bruno could be retried on different charges.

Richard Hartunian, the U.S. attorney for the Northern District of New York, charged Bruno with taking \$440,000 in payments disguised as consulting fees from an Albany businessperson. "Bruno did not perform legitimate consulting work commensurate with the money that he was paid," states the indictment.

Bruno is accused of taking the payments from the businessperson, identified in the previous trial as Jared Abbruzzese, even though he knew he was not entitled to them; he was receiving them for official acts; and he received the money, in part, because he could influence official action, according to the indictment.

Bruno also directed public money to companies connected to Abbruzzese, including a \$250,000 grant to Evident Technologies and a \$2.5 million grant to the Sage Colleges, said the indictment. If convicted, Bruno would face up to 20 years in prison and a maximum fine of \$250,000 on each of two fraud counts.

Last year, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Second Circuit overturned Bruno's two convictions for honest-services fraud, citing a 2010 ruling from the U.S. Supreme Court that charges of honest-services fraud applied only to schemes involving kickbacks and bribes, not just to a failure to disclose a conflict-of-interest. But the appeals court said the prosecution's evidence "would permit a reasonable jury to find that Bruno performed virtually nonexistent consulting work for substantial payments [and] attempted to cover up [his dealings]."

Former State Senator Is Sentenced to Seven Years in Vast Bribery Case

New York - *New York Times* - April 26, 2012

Carl Kruger, the once-powerful New York senator who resigned his office in disgrace and pleaded guilty to corruption charges in December, was sentenced to seven years in prison. Kruger was the first defendant to be sentenced in a widespread bribery conspiracy case that originally ensnared eight people, and was seen as offering yet more evidence of the apparently unending wave of corruption in Albany.

Kruger was convicted of two counts of conspiracy to commit honest services fraud and two counts of conspiracy to commit bribery. Prosecutors had asked U.S. District Court Judge Jed Rakoff to impose a prison sentence of nine to 11 years, as recommended under the advisory federal guidelines. The judge issued the lesser sentence to Kruger, citing his "many good deeds."

But Rakoff made it clear such credit was outweighed by the fact that Kruger had entered into "extensive, long-lasting, substantial bribery schemes that frankly were like daggers in the heart of honest government."

Kruger, who was elected to the state Senate in 1994 and rose to become the chairperson of the Senate Finance Committee, had been accused by the authorities of accepting more than \$1 million in bribes from two hospital executives, a prominent lobbyist, and a health care consultant. In return, he agreed to take official action to benefit them or their clients, said prosecutors.

FBI Behind Illegal Contributions to Oklahoma Lawmakers

Oklahoma - *The Oklahoman* - May 6, 2012

The FBI gave a lobbyist \$10,000 to make illegal campaign contributions to two Oklahoma legislators during a 2008 undercover operation, revealed federal prosecutors. The FBI created a fake Georgia company for the undercover operation. That company then hired an unsuspecting lobbyist, Andy Skeith, to promote its interests, show records.

Skeith was acquitted this year at a federal political corruption trial of extortion, conspiracy, and mail fraud counts. He was not charged for anything he did for the undercover company. His role has come up again because he wants the federal government to pay his defense expenses. Federal prosecutors allege Skeith violated state laws while working for the fake company. His defense attorney, Warren Gotcher, contends Skeith did nothing wrong.

"They spent a lot of money for nothing," said Gotcher. "It all showed that Andy was doing things like he was supposed to do. I don't know that he violated any state laws. The bottom line is that lobbyists give campaign contributions all the time. They're not paying for anything other than that somebody will at least know who the heck they are. It's just a cost of doing business."

The Oklahoman first reported in February about the FBI's phony company, Road Safety International LLC. The recent legal filing reveals new details about the undercover operation. Most significantly, it shows the lengths to which the FBI went to make the company appear legitimate to Skeith and others. That included supplying \$10,000 to Skeith to make donations to two lawmakers in a way that violated Oklahoma's campaign laws, according to the prosecutors' filing.

The FBI's fake company gave Skeith \$10,000 in June 2008 to make the donations. State Treasurer Ken Miller, then a state representative, reported getting a \$5,000 contribution from Skeith in July 2008. Miller said Skeith signed a donor card stating the contribution was freely given from personal funds. The FBI's phony company also paid for several expensive dinners with legislators in 2008, revealed prosecutors. Three of the dinners cost more than \$1,500.

Ex-Pa. Sen. Mellow Pleads Guilty to Conspiracy

Pennsylvania - *Appleton Post-Crescent; Associated Press* - May 9, 2012

Former Pennsylvania Sen. Robert Mellow pleaded guilty in a public corruption case involving the misuse of his taxpayer-funded staff. Mellow, who pleaded guilty to a federal conspiracy charge, faces up to five years in prison and a \$250,000 fine. He illegally used his Senate staff for campaign and fundraising between 2006 and 2010, and he filed a false 2008 tax return.

Prosecutors have said Mellow exhibited "willful blindness" while staffers were raising hundreds of thousands of dollars for the Friends of Bob Mellow campaign committee while on the public dime.

Mellow served four decades in the Senate and was one of the chamber's most powerful members when he opted not to seek an 11th term. He has already paid a \$21,000 fine for billing taxpayers to cover rental space for his district office in a building he and his wife had a financial interest in, according to the Pennsylvania Ethics Commission. Mellow also paid nearly \$32,000 stemming from the tax charge.

Jane Orie Resigns from State Senate

Pennsylvania - *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* - May 22, 2012

Facing sentencing on 14 criminal counts, State Sen. Jane Orie resigned Monday from the seat she has held for more than a decade.

Ms. Orie, 50, of McCandless, was found guilty in March of misusing her legislative staff to do campaign work. She has been suspended from practicing law and stands to lose her pension. Her sentencing initially was scheduled for Monday, but Allegheny County Common Pleas Judge Jeffrey Manning allowed her two additional weeks to repay defense costs paid by the State Senate.

"It has been an honor and a privilege for me to have served in the Senate of Pennsylvania," Ms. Orie wrote in a brief resignation letter dated Friday. Staffers will continue to respond to constituent requests in her former Harrisburg and district offices.

House Ethics Panel Wants Documents from Haley

South Carolina - *The State* - May 19, 2012

The House Ethics Committee wants W-2s and other employment documents from South Carolina Gov. Nikki Haley to prove she was working for a hospital's charitable foundation, not the hospital itself, and support her defense she broke no state ethics laws.

At issue is whether Haley, while a state representative, illegally worked as a lobbyist for Lexington Medical Center, as it sought legislative approval to build an open-heart surgery center, and exploited her status as a lawmaker to land donations from lobbyists and businesses for the hospital.

Based on the documents Haley turns over, the Ethics Committee could decide to close the case against Haley or move it to the full House for possible further action. The committee earlier reviewed the complaint against Haley and decided there was probable cause an ethics violation occurred. But the panel then immediately ruled Haley had broken no laws and no further review was needed.

But some lawmakers, including state Rep. James Smith, were not satisfied with the committee's work. They contend state law requires the panel to conduct a thorough investigation, not a superficial review, once probable cause of a violation is established.

"You can't do both," Smith told committee members. "The statute doesn't allow for you to find probable cause and then dismiss [the case]."

Committee members fired back, saying they had conducted a thorough investigation, meeting for a month in secret. The panel ruled probable cause existed in order to open its proceedings to the public and bring sunlight to the process, said state Rep. Phillip Lowe, a committee member.

Still, the ethics panel unanimously voted to require Haley to submit tax forms, including W-2s and supporting documents, to prove she was working for the Lexington Medical Center Foundation, not

Lexington Medical Center. Haley's attorneys have argued she worked for the hospital's charitable foundation from 2008 to 2010. That nonprofit is separate from the hospital and does not employ lobbyists at the statehouse, contend the lawyers.

In her required state financial disclosures, however, Haley originally reported she was paid \$110,000 a year by the hospital, not its foundation. The committee instructed Haley to correct those filings to show she was paid by the foundation, a change she since has made. But while the foundation was her employer, the hospital paid her salary as it does all foundation employees, according to a foundation official.

GAB Dismisses ALEC Complaint against Wanggaard

Wisconsin - *The Journal Times* - May 17, 2012

The Wisconsin Government Accountability Board (GAB) has dismissed a complaint against state Sen. Van Wanggaard, who was named as part of the complaint alleging American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) scholarships are impermissible under Wisconsin ethics and lobbying laws.

The Center for Media and Democracy filed a complaint with the GAB in March against Wanggaard and other state legislators. But the GAB dismissed the complaint against Wanggaard based on a letter from the senator stating he had not received any scholarship from ALEC and has not attended any ALEC conferences, according to the GAB letter. A representative of the Center for Media and Democracy could not offer any evidence contradicting those statements, according to the letter.

ALEC is a nonprofit that talks about state issues focusing on free markets and limited government. But it has become controversial because some say legislative ideas appear to have come from ALEC conventions, which legislators attend thanks to funds from corporate sponsors.

While Wanggaard's complaint was dismissed, the status of the complaint is unclear against other legislators, including state Rep. Robin Vos, Wisconsin's ALEC state chairperson. Vos' office said they have not received a letter from the GAB pertaining to the complaint.

Lobbyists' Lobbyist Draws Public Anger

Federal - *Chicago Tribune* - May 8, 2012

Callers heaped insults on lobbyist Howard Marlowe when he sat in a television studio taking questions during a call-in program. "I kind of think that you all are like money launderers," said one caller to C-SPAN identified as "Bob" in Petersburg, Virginia.

"You are the person between us and politicians – you stand between us and a voice," said "Mike" in Houston.

Marlowe told the callers in a calm voice they would find they were represented by lobbyists, too, if they knew where to look. The tense exchanges were a rare bridge between the public and the professionals who are paid to influence officials in Washington, D.C. Lobbyists push ideas as diverse as tax cuts for multinational corporations, regulatory changes for banks, and grant money for local charities.

C-SPAN hosted Marlowe, who in addition to running his own lobbying firm is the president of the American League of Lobbyists. The trade group claims 1,400 members. In all, about 12,700 lobbyists are registered on Capitol Hill, up from 12,500 in 2000, according to the Center for Responsive Politics.

Anger punctuated the 44-minute segment, echoing the low opinion of lobbyists that Americans voice in polls. The profession has been battered by the imprisonment of former lobbyist Jack Abramoff and by news stories of lobbyists' outsized influence.

"Rosie" in Silver Spring, Maryland said lobbyists secretly write too many laws and regulations that elected officials then present as their own work. "There should be a lot more disclosure of what's going on behind closed doors," she said.

Marlowe said lobbyists disclose much of what they do in quarterly filings that detail fees and issues. In April, the league proposed making the rules tougher. Marlowe sparred with callers who were concerned about corporate influence, telling one man opposed to the oil industry that environmental groups have lobbyists, too. "Everybody who's listening to us has a lobbyist," Marlowe said at another point.

The show was the latest in a series of media appearances for Marlowe, who started his own lobbying firm in 1984 and represents localities that want federal funding for water projects and other needs. Marlowe has said lobbyists need to counter the public's perception of them, especially as Congress weighs whether to change the rules they follow.

Ethics in the News – National Conference of State Legislatures



MARYLAND -- A bill passed that requires legislator conflict of interest forms be made accessible online, along with information about outside employment of legislators and spouses. The bill also creates an online registration form, to be filled out by those who wish to view the disclosures – one of four other states with such a requirement. The original version of the bill would have required that financial disclosure statements be made available online, but the provision was eventually removed. **Baltimore Sun** -- April 13, 2012. http://articles.baltimoresun.com/2012-04-13/news/bs-md-ethics-disclosure-20120414_1_joint-legislative-ethics-committee-legislative-session-common-cause-maryland

The Senate ethics committee publically reprimanded its majority leader for failing to disclose income for six years. The member had filed conflict of interest disclosures about the income. **Herald-Mail** -- May 3, 2012. http://articles.herald-mail.com/2012-05-03/news/31561399_1_disclosure-form-legislative-ethics-conflict-of-interest-form

NEW YORK -- The legislative ethics commission ordered former Senator Pedro Espada to pay \$80,000 in fines, the largest monetary judgment ever assessed by the commission. The ruling was issued over a finding that Espada violated nepotism laws. Espada is currently awaiting the jury's decision in his federal trial on embezzlement charges. **New York Times** -- May 4, 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/05/05/nyregion/pedro-espada-is-ordered-to-pay-80000-after-hiring-uncle.html?_r=1

NORTH CAROLINA -- The House minority party wrote the legislative ethics committee and the state ethics commission asking for an investigation of the Speaker's office. Two aides to the Speaker, including his chief of staff, resigned after they admitted to having close relationships with lobbyists. The complaints say that the relationships raise issues of conflicts of interest and undue influence on the legislative process and ask for the legislative committee to recommend any changes to law or policies

that could prevent similar situations in the future. **WAVY** -- May 4, 2012.
http://www.wavy.com/dpp/news/north_carolina/nc-dems-want-ethics-probe

RHODE ISLAND -- Opinion: Legislature's ethics embarrassing. **Barrington Patch** -- April 18, 2012. <http://barrington.patch.com/articles/legislature-s-stand-on-ethics-embarrassing>